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**PARLIAMENT OF TASMANIA**

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**LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL  
GOVERNMENT ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE "A"**

**INTERIM REPORT**

**ON**

**FINFISH FARMING IN TASMANIA**

**Members of the Committee**

Hon Ruth Forrest MLC (Chair)

Hon Kerry Finch MLC

Hon Meg Webb MLC

Hon Mike Gaffney MLC

Hon Sarah Lovell MLC

Hon Rob Valentine MLC

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# INTRODUCTION

1. At a meeting of the Legislative Council Government Administration Committee “A” on Tuesday 19 September 2019, it was resolved that an inquiry be established to inquire into and report upon the planning, assessment, operation and regulation of finfish farming in Tasmania, with particular reference to:
  1. *The implementation of the Sustainable Industry Growth Plan for the Salmon Industry and its impact on commercial finfish farming operations and local communities, including:*
    - a) *data collection and publication;*
    - b) *progress in the development of an industry wide biosecurity plan;*
  2. *Application of the Marine Farming Planning Act 1995 relating to:*
    - a) *preparation and approval process for marine farming development plans, including modifications and amendments to marine farming development plans;*
    - b) *allocation of leases, applications for and granting of leases;*
    - c) *management of finfish farming operations with respect to the prevention of environmental harm;*
  3. *Any other matter incidental thereto.*
2. On 26 November 2019, the Committee resolved to discharge Hon Sarah Lovell MLC at her request. In accordance with Sessional Order 5 (30), a Sub-Committee was formed to continue the inquiry under the existing terms of reference.
3. The Membership of the Sub-Committee is:
  - Hon Meg Webb MLC (Inquiry Chair);
  - Hon Ruth Forrest MLC;
  - Hon Kerry Finch MLC;

- Hon Mike Gaffney MLC; and
  - Hon Rob Valentine MLC.
4. The Sub-Committee received 225 formal submissions. Public and private hearings have been held in Hobart on 11, 12, 17, 21 February, in Burnie on 24 February, and via videoconference on 1 April 2020. 29 witnesses gave verbal evidence to the Sub-Committee at these hearings.
  5. The Hon Meg Webb MLC attended a site visit of the Petuna operations, and the Hon Meg Webb MLC and Hon Rob Valentine MLC attended a site visit of Tassal's operations. A Sub-Committee tour of Huon Aquaculture's operations was scheduled for 2 April 2020 but was postponed due to strictures surrounding the COVID-19 pandemic. The Sub-Committee intends to reschedule the tour of Huon Aquaculture at a later date.
  6. The Sub-Committee intends to undertake a range of additional site visits prior to presenting its Final Report.
  7. Due to the operational strictures placed on the Sub-Committee resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic, it was considered appropriate to report on progress made prior to the interruption. The Sub-Committee Inquiry will be ongoing.
  8. The Sub-Committee Inquiry has established a dedicated webpage at [https://www.parliament.tas.gov.au/ctee/Council/GovAdminA\\_Fin.htm](https://www.parliament.tas.gov.au/ctee/Council/GovAdminA_Fin.htm). All submissions and transcripts (where evidence is made publicly available) are included on the webpage.
  9. The Committee intends that the Report be considered in its entirety as an Interim Report of the Inquiry.
  10. The Committee resolved that Members of the Sub-Committee be authorised to speak publicly about the Report in their capacity as Members of the Sub-Committee.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'R. Forrest'.

**Hon Ruth Forrest MLC  
Committee Chair  
9 April 2020**

# APPENDIX A



2020

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## Parliament of Tasmania

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LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL  
GOVERNMENT ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE "A"

# INTERIM REPORT

ON

## FINFISH FARMING IN TASMANIA

**Members of the Sub-Committee Inquiry:**

**Hon Meg Webb MLC (Chair)**

**Hon Kerry Finch MLC**

**Hon Ruth Forrest MLC**

**Hon Mike Gaffney MLC**

**Hon Rob Valentine MLC**

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# ABBREVIATIONS

|               |  |
|---------------|--|
| <b>BSA</b>    | Bruny Sustainable Aquaculture                                  |
| <b>CSIRO</b>  | Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation   |
| <b>DPIPWE</b> | Department of Primary Industries, Parks, Water and Environment |
| <b>EDO</b>    | Environmental Defenders Office                                 |
| <b>EPA</b>    | Environment Protection Authority                               |
| <b>ET</b>     | Environment Tasmania   |
| <b>FRDC</b>   | Fisheries Research and Development Corporation                 |
| <b>IMAS</b>   | Institute for Marine and Antarctic Studies                     |
| <b>MAST</b>   | Marine and Safety Tasmania                                     |
| <b>NOFF</b>   | Neighbours of Fish Farming                                     |
| <b>SMT</b>    | Seafood and Maritime Training                                  |
| <b>TAMP</b>   | Tasmanian Alliance for Marine Protection                       |
| <b>TCT</b>    | Tasmanian Conservation Trust                                   |
| <b>TPMP</b>   | Tasman Peninsula Marine Protection                             |
| <b>TSGA</b>   | Tasmanian Salmonid Growers Association                         |



# INTRODUCTION

1. At a meeting of the Legislative Council Government Administration Committee “A” on Tuesday 19 September 2019, it was resolved that an inquiry be established to inquire into and report upon the planning, assessment, operation and regulation of finfish farming in Tasmania, with particular reference to:

1. *The implementation of the Sustainable Industry Growth Plan for the Salmon Industry and its impact on commercial finfish farming operations and local communities, including:*

a) *data collection and publication;*

b) *progress in the development of an industry wide biosecurity plan;*

2. *Application of the Marine Farming Planning Act 1995 relating to:*

a) *preparation and approval process for marine farming development plans, including modifications and amendments to marine farming development plans;*

b) *allocation of leases, applications for and granting of leases;*

c) *management of finfish farming operations with respect to the prevention of environmental harm;*

3. *Any other matter incidental thereto.*

2. On 26 November 2019, the Committee resolved to discharge Hon Sarah Lovell MLC at her request. In accordance with Sessional Order 5 (30), a Sub-Committee was formed to continue the inquiry under the existing terms of reference.

3. The Membership of the Sub-Committee is:

- Hon Meg Webb MLC (Inquiry Chair);
- Hon Ruth Forrest MLC;
- Hon Kerry Finch MLC;

- Hon Mike Gaffney MLC; and
  - Hon Rob Valentine MLC.
4. The Sub-Committee received 225 formal submissions, all of which are published on the Inquiry webpage.
  5. Public and private hearings were held in Hobart on 11, 12, 17, 21 February, in Burnie on 24 February, and via videoconference on 1 April 2020.
  6. The following 29 witnesses gave verbal evidence to the Sub-Committee at these hearings:
    - Environmental Defenders Office (EDO);
    - Tasmanian Conservation Trust Inc (TCT);
    - Institute for Marine and Antarctic Studies (IMAS);
    - Bruny Sustainable Aquaculture (BSA);
    - Neighbours of Fish Farming (NOFF);
    - Tasmanian Alliance for Marine Protection (TAMP);
    - Tasman Peninsula Marine Protection (TPMP);
    - Mr Chris Wells;
    - Mr Geoffrey Swan;
    - Department of Primary Industries, Parks, Water and Environment (DPIPWE);
    - Dr Christine Coughanowr;
    - The Australia Institute;
    - Seafood and Maritime Training (SMT);
    - Tasmanian Greens and Senator Whish-Wilson;
    - BioMar Pty Ltd;
    - Environment Protection Authority (EPA);
    - WWF Australia;

- Environment Tasmania (ET);
  - Bob Brown Foundation;
  - Barbara Nowak and Louise Cherrie;
  - Huon Aquaculture Company Pty Ltd;
  - Dr Lisa-ann Gerschwin;
  - Tasmanian Salmonid Growers Association (TSGA)
  - Petuna Aquaculture;
  - Mr Mark Bishop;
  - Mr Matthew Morgan;
  - Mr Craig Garland;
  - CSIRO; and
  - Dr Shea Cameron.
7. All submissions and transcripts of hearings (where evidence is made publicly available) are included on the Inquiry webpage which can be accessed via [https://www.parliament.tas.gov.au/ctee/Council/GovAdminA\\_Fin.htm](https://www.parliament.tas.gov.au/ctee/Council/GovAdminA_Fin.htm).
8. The Sub-Committee intends to hear from the following witnesses and any additional representative or key witnesses identified during the ongoing inquiry process:
- Mr Charles and Ms Alison Stubbs;
  - Wilderness Society;
  - Huon Resource Development Group;
  - Fisheries Research and Development Corporation (FRDC);
  - Brand Tasmania;
  - Aquafeed;
  - Marine and Safety Tasmania (MAST);
  - Marine Farming Planning Review Panel;

- Tassal Group;
  - EPA (second appearance);
  - DPIPWE (second appearance) accompanied by the Minister; and
  - TSGA (second appearance).
9. The Hon Meg Webb MLC attended a site visit of the Petuna operations at the Cressy Hatchery and Rowella fish farm facility on 27 February 2020. All other Members of the Sub-Committee have previously attended tours of Petuna's operations.
  10. The Hon Meg Webb MLC and Hon Rob Valentine MLC attended a site visit at Tassal's operations at the hatcheries in Ranelagh, processing facility in Huonville and their headquarters in Hobart on 5 February 2020. All other Members of the Sub-Committee have previously attended tours of Tassal's operations. Tassal made an offer for the Sub-Committee to attend a marine tour, however this has been postponed due to the COVID-19 pandemic.
  11. The Sub-Committee accepted an offer from Huon Aquaculture to attend a site visit of their facilities on 2 April 2020. This visit was postponed due to COVID-19 restrictions.
  12. The Sub-Committee intends to undertake a range of additional site visits prior to presenting its Final Report.
  13. Due to the operational strictures placed on the Sub-Committee resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic, it was considered appropriate to report on progress made prior to the interruption.
  14. The Sub-Committee notes that Government departments, particularly DPIPWE, are currently focused on the COVID-19 response and it would not be appropriate to place additional demands on Government personnel. Similarly, the Sub-Committee recognises other key witnesses are likely to have competing priorities at present.
  15. The Sub-Committee intends to suspend the public hearings process and site visits, and focus on administrative tasks relating to the Inquiry until it is appropriate to resume Parliamentary activities of a public nature.

16. This Report should be considered in its entirety as an Interim Report of the Sub-Committee.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Meg Webb', written in a cursive style.

**Hon Meg Webb MLC  
Inquiry Chair  
9 April 2020**